

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 39

By Crowe

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of William Reed Darden, Sr., of Johnson City.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Mr. William Reed Darden, Sr.; and

WHEREAS, William R. Darden, Sr., was an exemplary public servant, consummate professional, and ardent patriot who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, foreshadowing his foremost commitment to defend and protect his country, William Reed Darden was appropriately born on the Fourth of July in 1918; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Darden, a member of America's Greatest Generation, sacrificed his personal safety and alarm to ensure the individual and collective freedom of all Americans by selflessly serving with courage and gallantry during World War II; and

WHEREAS, with the bravery and conviction of a true patriot, William R. Darden enlisted in the United States Army prior to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, and served during World War II in the European Theatre of Operations; Mr. Darden bore witness to Adolf Hitler's Eagle's Nest after arriving in Germany shortly after VE Day; and

WHEREAS, a graduate of Science Hill High School and East Tennessee State University, Bill Darden spent several dedicated years after completing his education in the banking business before enlisting to serve this great Nation; and

WHEREAS, William Reed Darden began his professional career in his early teenage years at the soda fountain and counter at the Shamrock and the Sevier Shop, located within the former John Sevier Hotel in downtown Johnson City; Mr. Darden waited upon notable figures such as Eleanor Roosevelt and J.C. Penney during his employment at this historic hotel and

WHEREAS, following his military service, William Darden owned and operated the Rainbow Corner restaurant in the “Tree Streets” neighborhood of Johnson City from 1946 until 1983; “The Corner” is the source of countless memories for many Johnson City residents as a community staple and neighborhood gathering spot; and

WHEREAS, Bill Darden met the love of his life, the former Lucille Stephens of Greenville, Tennessee, at the Rainbow Corner in 1950, and the two were joined in marriage on Christmas day in 1952; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Darden ardently served his hometown with distinction and alacrity as the former Commissioner on the Washington County Commission; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Darden evidenced his strong commitment to community as a Charter Member and Director of the Junior Chamber of Commerce of Johnson City, and as a life member of the VFW, American Legion and BPO Elks; and

WHEREAS, William R. Darden, Sr., was an active and lifelong member of the Munsey Memorial United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS, William R. Darden, Sr., was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, he enjoyed the loving companionship of his devoted wife of fifty-eight years, Lucille, and was the proud father of two sons, William R. Darden, Jr., and Stephen M. Darden; this remarkable gentleman is also survived by his youngest brother, Thomas Malcolm Darden, and his wife Joan Harrell Darden; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Darden was preceded in death by his parents, Thomas Matson Darden and Lula Bryant Reed Darden; his beloved sisters, Dorothy Mae Darden, Helen Darden Ross, Martha Darden Wilcox and Mary Darden; his brother, Vincent Lawrence Darden; his nephew, Daniel Ross; and his niece, Mary Elizabeth Wilcox Peters; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Darden leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of William Reed Darden, Sr., reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Darden.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.